knock on doors and usually walk away with sweets or coins. The survival of Jonnkonnu in Wilmington after slavery was remarkable and by the 1880's the celebration had peaked in participation.[62] However, the violence of 1898 marked an end to the long tradition as Waddell's Board of Aldermen decreed on December 26, 1898 that "the wearing of disguises of any kind by any person or number of persons, whether in the form of masks or otherwise on the streets or other public places of the city is hereby prohibited." The new law was enforced by police arrest and $10 fine.[63] By mid twentieth century, oral tradition in the community among older African Americans agreed that the end of their Jonkonnu celebrations was due to the violence of 1898.[64] Whites took over the celebrations, with young boys following the "Coonering" tradition and enjoying the ritual for themselves as early as 1905.[65]

A second celebration that was cancelled as a result of the violence was the annual Emancipation Day observance. The celebration routinely took place on New Year's Day each year, with festivities including a parade, speeches and music. By 1874, a permanent organization had been created to organize the event and chairmen annually were selected to plan the celebration. The planning and preparations took place throughout the year and Emancipation Day was seen as a highlight of the year by many who recalled slavery. One of the largest commemorations took place in 1895, with a parade through the center of town and speeches given in a packed Thalian Hall. Wilmington's white newspapers routinely covered the event, but coverage became sporadic after November 1898. It is unclear if the January 1899 celebration, to be led by Andrew Walker, Luke Grady, James Howe, Elijah Green, and John Holloway, took place. The Wilmington *Messenger* noted that the parade was not held, but services could have taken place in churches. The local leaders reorganized and by 1902 the day was once again marked by speeches, parades, and music.[66] Emancipation Day celebrations declined nationwide around 1910 although they persisted in Wilmington with regularity until mid-century. The decline in commemorating the day has been seen by

[62] For a detailed description of Jonkonnu in North Carolina, see Elizabeth A. Fenn, " 'A Perfect Equality Seemed to Reign': Slave Society and Jonkonnu," *North Carolina Historical Review*, (April 1988), 127-153.

[63] Laws with similar wording had been passed during the height of the Ku Klux Klan movement in order to discourage the use of masks to protect men who threatened or attacked blacks in the 1870's. This ordinance was clearly designed to affect the Jonkonnu celebrations. Minutes of the Board of Aldermen, December 26, 1898, Wilmington, North Carolina, North Carolina State Archives.

[64] Fenn, "Slave Society and Jonkonnu,"

[65] William B. McKoy, *Wilmington, N. C.: Do You Remember When?* (Greenville, S.C.: Privately Published, 1957), 141-145.

[66] Most Emancipation Day celebrations were held in local churches instead of public spaces such as Thalian Hall. Historian Fitzhugh Brundage has called early Emancipation Day celebrations a way for blacks to "celebrate their history and participate in civic life in ways that had been impossible during slavery." He contended that the commemorations were "an unmistakable challenge to white understandings of the past." Historian Mitch Kachun suggested that, despite racial violence throughout the South, Emancipation Day celebrations persisted "to a greater extent than one might expect." However, Kachun explained that, instead of public spectacles lauding the merits of African American citizenship and pressing participants to push forward in every way, speeches urged "racial harmony" and statements meant to appease whites. Reaves, *Strength Through Struggle,* 3-6; Wilmington *Messenger* January 3, 1899, January 2, 1903; Wilmington *Star*, January 2, 1898; W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *The Southern Past: A Clash of Race and Memory* (Belknap Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2005) 10; Mitch Kachun, *Festivals of Freedom: Memory and Meaning in African American Emancipation Celebrations, 1808-1915* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 178-181.